II. Fodder Crops:—

(i) Central Sector Scheme of Central Feed and Fodder Development Organisation.

(ii) Centrally Sponsored Assistance to States for Feed and Fodder Development. Under the Coarse Cereals Programmes, incentives to the farmers are provided on the distribution of seeds, farm implements and sprinkler sets so as to motivate them to adopt improved production technologies. Besides, field demonstrations and farmers trainings are organised for effective transfer of crop production technologies. Seed Minikits of newly released hybridhigh yielding varieties are distributed to the farmers to popularise them.

Under the Central Feed and Fodder Development Organisation, the Central and Regional Stations produce fodder seed and undertake training, demonstration and distribution of fodder minikits. Assistance is provided to States on strengthening of fodder seed production farms, establishment of fodder banks, seed production through registered growers, enrichment of straw and cellulosic wastes, silvipasture-grass land development to increase fodder production.

(c) As a result of implementation of various programme, the productivity of coarse cereals in Gujarat has increased to 1105 kg/ha in 1998-99 from 845 kgha in 1980-81. Besides, many high yielding fodder crops were popularised and adopted by farmers to enhance production of animal produce.

Strengthening of Plant Quarantine Measures

*373. DR. GOPAL RAO VITHALRAO PATIL: WM the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that India and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have entered into an agreement to strengthen plant quarantine measures in India and in South Asia; and

(b) if so, the details thereof;

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Government and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have entered into an agreement for a period of five years to strengthen Plan Quarantine measures in India only. The project aims to prevent introduction of exotic pests into the country through development of infrastructure and specialised facilities for quarantine operations and upgrading of technical manpower. The project will be effective till December 2000. The Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture is nodal agency for execution of this project in coordination with the Food & Agriculture Organisation of United Nations (FAO). The contribution of UNDP for expert consultancies, study tours, training of Plant Quarantine Officers and positioning of ultra-modern scientific equipment is to the tune of US $ 3 Million. The Government of India input in kind towards construction of laboratory buildings and glass houses, equipment and manpower at 5 major Plant Quarantine Stations, namely, Amritsar, Calcutta, Chennai. Mumbai and New Delhi amounts to US $ 13.2 Million, approximately Rs. 36.95 crores.

Improvement in SSI Sector

*374. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the Minister of SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that small scale industrial sector presently contributing around 15 million jobs, 40 per cent of industrial production and 35 per cent of exports, is be set with technological obsolescence, inadequate management and marketing, as also deficiency in information dissemination;

(b) keeping in view its importance in national economy whether Government are thinking of adopting measures for having overall improvement in SSI sector; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SMALL SCALE INDUSTRIES, AGRO AND RURAL INDUSTRIES,